

THE ALL AFRICAN WOMEN'S GROUP



We were imprisoned, beaten, raped, starved, made to do forced labour or military service under dictatorships supported and armed by Western governments and/or corporations. We came to the UK where we thought our torture would be finished but it has continued. The problem many of us face now is that our asylum claims are denied and we have nowhere to sleep, no money, no food. Some of us have been locked up in detention centres; many have suffered racist attacks.

We got together at the Crossroads Women's Centre and formed a self-help group to support each other: going to court, finding doctors, speaking out about our experiences and fundraising. We are pressing for recognition of our caring work, for housing, healthcare, and the same protection and resources that everyone in every country needs.

We demand:

1. **An end to detention; immediately release mothers and children**, pregnant women, survivors of rape and other torture, people who are mentally or physically sick and other vulnerable people.
2. **An end to the separation of mothers from their children** by detention or by destitution.
3. **An independent investigation into claims of rape** and other sexual abuse against women in Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre.
4. **The restoration of legal aid** including for family and private life human rights claims.
5. **Access to NHS medical treatment and care** for all people seeking asylum including those in detention.
6. **An end to the apartheid system of benefits, healthcare and housing** for asylum seekers where people are forced to survive on 50% of poverty line benefits and suffer slum housing and forced dispersal.
7. **An end to the deliberate policy of destitution** for asylum seekers whose cases have been refused.
8. **Immigration officials, lawyers and judges who are shown to be sexist, racist, hostile or discriminatory in other ways, should be disciplined/sacked.** Violence from guards during deportations must be immediately and thoroughly investigated and those found responsible prosecuted. Jimmy Mubenga, who was killed by G4S guards on a British Airways flight, will not be forgotten.
9. **An official investigation into what happens to people who are deported.**
10. **The right to family reunion with children we were forced to leave behind when we fled to the UK.**
11. **Support for the self-help activities of asylum seekers.** No collaboration by voluntary organizations and charities in providing privatised asylum services.

Working with Black Women's Rape Action Project, Legal Action for Women and Women Against Rape, we co-ordinate self-help meetings and a rota of volunteers providing practical help to women seeking asylum, particular those who call from detention. Please get in touch if you would like to volunteer with us. Click [here](#) copies of Legal Action for Women's updated free Self-Help Guide Against Detention and Deportation.